

[Creature Kit](#)

**Wicked Ladybug**

Please note, the ladybugs are quite difficult to take care of, and are only recommended for experienced keepers.

Despite what people think...ladybugs are NOT ladies!! Ladybugs are actually carnivorous insects that eat aphids. Ladybug larvae look like tiny crocodiles, and will continually crawl around trying to 'bump' into their prey and once they do, they will eat it very ferociously. Once the Ladybug larva eats lots of aphids, they will change into pupae and then transform into a Wicked Ladybug. The adult Ladybugs also eat aphids.

**Information about Ladybugs**

Ladybugs go by a few different names; they are also called ladybirds and ladybeetles. Ladybugs aren't actually bugs at all! They are a type of beetle from the beetle family Coccinellidae. Over 6000 different types of ladybugs have been described in the world, with around 500 of them living in Australia. Ladybugs are commonly used by farmers to control aphids in their crops without the need for pesticides. This is a form of biological control

**Life Cycle of the Ladybug**

Ladybugs undergo complete metamorphosis and have 4 life stages that look completely different to each other. The ladybug starts off as a tiny egg which is normally white or yellow in colour. This egg is laid close to a food source (aphids or other insects) on a plant and the larvae will hatch out of this egg in 2-14 days.

The ladybug larva looks like tiny crocodile and is very small at first. It will eat aphids or other suitable food (such as mites and moth eggs and even ladybug eggs) and grow very quickly. The larva has 4 instars which mean it will shed its outer exoskeleton (or skin) 4 times before it turns into a pupa. When the larva is ready to shed its exoskeleton, it will attach itself by the tail to a hard surface (like the inside of your Creature Cottage) and gently move out of its exoskeleton, leaving the old one behind. Each time it sheds its exoskeleton it will get slightly larger and its appearance will change slightly. The fully grown 4th instar larvae will then stop eating, attach itself to a hard surface, and shed its exoskeleton one more time to form a pupae. This stage lasts 7-14 days and the pupa does not eat or move during this time. After the ladybug has fully developed inside the pupae, the adult ladybug will emerge (see the pictures to the left!). The body and wings of the ladybug are soft when it emerges and may look pale or white in colour but after a few hours its exoskeleton will harden and you will see the familiar colours of the ladybug

## **Taking Care of Your Wicked Ladybugs**

You will be supplied with 5-10 Wicked Ladybug larvae which you will need to feed on a daily basis. The larvae eat live aphids but can also eat other small insects so ask our customer service staff about this. The wicked ladybugs can eat up to 50 aphids each per day and will start to eat each other if there is not enough food.